

School Committee Meeting Minutes  
Shirley Middle School  
August 2, 2004

Present: Hugh Muffoletto, Vice Chairperson  
Don Parker  
Paul Wilson

Also Present: Dr. Thomas Scott, Superintendent  
Patricia Stern, Business Manager  
Joe Deguglielmo, DEAC

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

As there was no Public Participation, the committee moved forward to discuss Old Business.

Old Business:

The members reviewed the minutes of the June 22, 2004 meeting. A corrected version was handed out to all members, reflecting the correct members in attendance at that meeting. Mr. Parker motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

Business Affairs:

Patricia Stern reviewed Payroll Warrants 803 and 303. Mrs. Stern informed the committee that payables warrants will be delayed due to the implementation of new software. All vendors have been notified of the delay. Mrs. Stern stated that the next payables warrant will be processed at the end of August.

New Business:

Dr. Scott reviewed the District Goals Update. He began by stating that the committee is normally given updates in January and at the end of the year. This year Dr. Scott would like to give an update to the committee once MCAS results are available. The end-of-year updates were as follows:

English Language Arts:

- MCAS preparatory books were purchased for grades through grade 5
- *Fine Lines* was published twice this year at LAW by Mrs. Mahoney
- Implementation of grade 2 spelling program
- Updated writing programs through grade 8
- Speech pathologist and SPED teachers at middle school worked together with students to make good progress

Reading:

- Exceeded goals for grade 3 – went from 58% proficient to 67% proficient

Math:

- Purchased Addison Wesley math books for grades through grade 5 and have implemented the program
- Administered mid-year and end of year math assessments to students – will implement beginning of year assessments next year

Science:

- Technology issues have been resolved
- In-focus projectors have been a great success

Accreditation:

- Per decision made by school committee, school year 2004-2005 will start the preparation process of accreditation
- Formal process will begin in September 2005

Highly Qualified Teacher Assistants:

- Per NCLB, all TA's need to be highly qualified by 2006
- TA's are currently working toward that goal

Facilities:

- Middle School handbook successfully implemented
- Graduate course offered at elementary school; also working on handbook

DEAC:

- Currently working on goal of partnering with one or more towns for charter school, etc.
- Informed that Devens students are doing well in Shirley School system
- Good response from parents on Parents Survey
- Homeless Grant audit stated that Shirley is meeting the needs of the homeless community located on Devens

Climate:

- Physical assaults at middle school have decreased dramatically over last year
- Elementary assaults have increased, however data collection last year may not have been accurate

Peer Mediation:

- Began this year with 20 students trained as mediators
- Auditors are amazed at the number of mediations this year – a great success
- Grant has been awarded to allow the program to expand to 3 days per week

The committee thanked Dr. Scott for the update.

The Center School financial update was reviewed. Dr. Scott informed the committee that this information was compiled at the request of the Deficit Reduction Committee. They were primarily concerned in the cost of keeping and operating the Center School. Lonnie Ouellette, Early Learning Director, submitted a brief overview of the programs offered at Center, including one classroom school year and a summer program. Next year enrollment has made it necessary to open a second classroom for the school year. Mrs. Stern briefly reviewed the financial information, explaining that the projected profit of operating Center School in FY05 will be approximately \$15,000. She went on to explain that compiling data for the Center School programs is done in conjunction with the Devens school data, as preschool programs are offered at both sites and grant monies are spent at both sites as well. If the Devens and Center Schools were closed, a net savings of \$9200 can be expected. However, there would be a cost to renovate classrooms, bathrooms and playgrounds if PK and Kindergarten were to return to LAW.

Student Transportation fees were discussed. Dr. Scott began by clarifying information presented at a March 2004 meeting. At that time, one or two school districts charged all students to ride their busses, regardless of their distance from school. It was later determined that these districts were in error and could only charge those students in grades 7-12 and those students in grades K-6 who lived within 2 miles from school. With these rules in place, the number of students that we could charge would result in approximately \$18,000 in revenue. Given the time it would take to implement such a program and inform all families impacted by bus fees this late in the summer, it was suggested that the committee wait until January to review the matter further. Dr. Scott informed the members that he is scheduled to meet on August 3 with Hope Ball of First Student Transportation. They will look into the options available to them to reduce the transportation costs. Cliff Bailey, Shirley resident, suggested that the Ayer and Lunenburg high school busses overlap their routes to pick up students from Shirley. Dr. Scott stated that he would discuss the idea with Ms. Ball.

Dr. Scott informed the committee that the part-time Occupational Therapist has resigned. He currently has an advertisement in the newspaper, as this position is critical to the Individual Education Plans of many students. Mr. Parker motioned to authorize the hiring of a part-time Occupational Therapist. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

The meeting was suspended at 7:22 p.m. so the committee could go into Executive Session to discuss a student welfare issue.

Roll Call:        Mr. Wilson:    Yes  
                      Mr. Parker:     Yes  
                      Mr. Muffoletto: Yes

At 7:26 p.m. the committee reconvened to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Karen Gutheil